

REMARKS

Re-examination and allowance of the present application is respectfully requested.

Initially, Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for foreign priority, and for indicating that all certified copies of the priority documents have been received. However, the Examiner inadvertently failed to indicate whether the drawings filed in the application have been accepted. Applicants believe that the filed drawings are acceptable, and respectfully requests confirmation of the acceptance of the drawings in the next official communication.

Applicants also thank the Examiner for indicating his consideration of most of the documents submitted for consideration in various Information Disclosure Statements. However, Applicants note that the Examiner did not consider the numerous English language Abstracts that were submitted, on the ground that they are duplicates. Applicants believe that by this statement, the Examiner believes that the various cited Japanese language publications and their associated English language Abstracts are one and the same. Applicants submit that this is incorrect. Applicants submit that the Japanese language documents (which were indicated as having been considered) are documents that are separate and distinct from the English language documents that were submitted, and as such, the Examiner is obligated to consider both the foreign language document and the English language document. Accordingly, the Examiner is

respectfully requested to indicate his consideration of the previously submitted English language Abstracts. For the convenience of the Examiner, Applicants re-submit copies of the PTO-1449 Forms that accompanied the previously filed Information Disclosure Statements. The Examiner is respectfully requested to complete the PTO-1449 Forms and to return copies of the completed Forms to Applicants to confirm the Examiner's consideration of the previously submitted material.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 1-21. By the current amendment, Applicants amend claims 1-14 to eliminate the use of "means plus function" claim language. The present amendment to these claims is submitted to not affect the scope of the claims. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to re-confirm the allowability of claims 1-21 in the next official communication.

Applicants wish to clarify the record with respect to the basis for the patentability of claims in the present application. While Applicants do not disagree with the Examiner's indication that certain identified features are not disclosed by the references, as noted by the Examiner, Applicants further wish to clarify that the claims in the present application recite a combination of features, and the basis for patentability of these claims is based on the totality of the features recited therein.

The Examiner objects to the drawings, and rejects claims 22, 23, 25, 31, 32 and 34 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, indicating that the feature recited in

the claims that “said N sub-fields ... have small or equal weights” in claims 22 and 31 are not shown in the drawings, which drawings indicate that the weights are greater in the order from SF1 to SFN. By the current amendment, Applicants amend the claims to correct an error therein, and to properly indicate that the weight increases from SF1 to SFN and that any adjacent sub-fields may have the same weight. Support for this revision may be found, for example, at page 72, lines 8-11 of Applicants’ specification.

In view of the amending of the claims, Applicants submit that the claims conform to the features depicted in the drawings and specification. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the ground for the 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph rejection of claims 22, 23, 25, 31, 32 and 34, and the objection to the drawings, no longer exist, and respectfully request withdrawal of this ground of rejection and objection.

Applicants respectfully traverse the 35 U.S.C. §102(e) rejection of claims 22 and 31 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,646,625 to SHIGETA et al. or U.S. Patent 6,414,658 to TOKUNAGA.

While Applicants believe that the rejections are inappropriate, Applicants have amended claim 22 to include the subject matter of claim 23, and have amended claim 31 to include the subject matter of claim 32 in order to advance the application to issue. As such, the amendments to the claims should not be taken as acquiescing to the appropriateness of the rejections, but as a desire to

obtain allowance of the application. Further, Applicants expressly reserve to submit similar type claims in another application.

In view of the amendments to claims 22 and 31, Applicants submit that the grounds for the rejections of these claims no longer exist. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. §102 rejections. Further, the Examiner is requested to indicate the allowability of all the pending claims, and to pass this application to issue.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the fact that none of the art of record, whether considered alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the present invention as now defined by the pending claims, and in further view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the Examiner's action and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested and are believed to be appropriate.

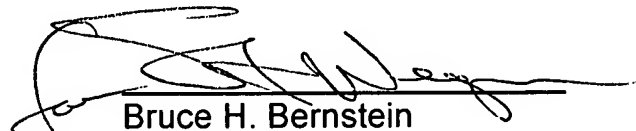
Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Commissioner determine that an extension of time is required in order to render this response timely and/or complete, a formal request for an extension of time, under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), is herewith made in an amount equal to the time period required to render this response timely and/or complete. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any required extension of time fee under 37 C.F.R. §1.17 to

Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

If there should be any questions concerning this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
Tomoko MORITA et al.



Bruce H. Bernstein
Reg. No. 29,027

December 21, 2005
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 716-1191

Steven Wegman
Reg. No. 31,438